

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-13 (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) A probe deflection device comprising:

an outer tube having a proximal end and a distal end, the outer tube including a closure that is movable between an open and a closed condition, the closure having an exit hole defining in a closed condition of the closure, wherein the exit hole defines a travel path; and

an inner tube fitted to slide within the outer tube such that as the inner tube slides through the exit hole, the inner tube follows the travel path.

15. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, wherein the exit hole includes a center line that creates an oblique angle with the longitudinal axis.

16. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, wherein the closure has an actuator arm accessible at the proximal end of the outer tube.

17. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, wherein the closure is capable of being closed as the inner tube is inserted into the outer tube.

18. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, wherein the closure is capable of being open as the inner tube is withdrawn into the outer tube.

19. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, wherein the inner tube is flexible.

20. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, wherein the inner tube is fabricated from a material having memory.

21. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, further comprising:

a flexible stylet capable of being inserted into the inner tube, the flexible stylet having a blunt polished tip.

22. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 21, wherein the flexible stylet includes an imaging contrast media.

23. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 22, wherein the stylet has a cavity holding the imaging contrast media.

24. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 23, wherein the imaging contrast media is a saline solution.

25. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, wherein the outer tube is rotatable about the inner tube.

26. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, further comprising:
a probe inserted in the inner tube.

27. (Original) The probe deflection device of claim 14, further comprising:
a thin retractable sheath covering the exit hole.

Claims 28-38 (Cancelled).

39. (Currently Amended) A method of positioning a probe in a target area that is off axis from an outer tube inserted in a biological subject, the method comprising:

inserting an inner tube having a tip into the outer tube having an outer surface and a closure having an exit hole such that the tip extends through the exit hole of the closure in a closed condition and beyond the outer surface of the outer tube;

inserting a probe into the inner tube such that the probe extends beyond the outer surface of the outer tube;

opening the closure; and

removing the inner tube without deflecting of the probe.

Claims 40 – 44 (Cancelled).

45. (Currently Amended) A method of orienting an outer tube of a probe deflection device in a biological subject, the method comprising:

inserting an outer tube having a surface and an off axis exit hole into the biological subject;

inserting a stylet having an imaging marker and a blunt tip into an inner tube to obturate the off axis exit hole such that when the stylet is fully inserted into the inner tube, the blunt tip and the inner tube distal end form a smooth blunt tip suitable for tunneling through tissue of a biological subject;

inserting the inner tube having a distal end into the outer tube such that the distal end does not extend beyond the surface of the outer tube;

identifying an error in orientation of the outer tube using the imaging marker; and

if the error exceeds a predetermined value, rotating the outer tube to correct the error.

46. (Original) The method of claim 45, wherein identifying an error in orientation of the outer tube comprises:

using imaging to identify the orientation of the outer tube.

47. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein using imaging to identify the orientation of the outer tube comprises:

imaging the imaging marker.